CAPSULE SUMMARY
BA-1000
St. James African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church
415 Jefferson Avenue
East Towson, Baltimore County
1881
Private

The St. James African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church at 415 Jefferson Avenue was constructed in 1881 in the East Towson neighborhood of Baltimore County. The history of East Towson dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures.

This church was first built as a one-story wood frame building it was then raised to two-stories in 1906. This Gothic Revival building has a front gable roof with a three bay wide façade and a raised central entrance. The entrance features double-leaf wood-paneled doors, a transom boarded-over, and a square-edged wood surround. Semi-circular brick steps with two iron handrails provide access to entrance. The center bay on the second story are paired 1/1 double-hung sash lancet arched windows. Each of the remaining windows are single one-light lancet arched windows. The panels above the windows are covered with weatherboard. The far right bay on the first story has a non-historic one-leaf wood paneled door covered with an aluminum awning. There is one interior brick stretcher bond chimney, and a canted oriel addition on the rear elevation. The original church was re-clad with asbestos shingles. The solid foundation is parged concrete, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Attached to the rear of the south elevation is a two-story Gothic Revival Parsonage (BA-01001).

## Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

1. Name of F	Property	(indicate preferred na	me)					
historic	St. James Africa	an Union First Colored Metho	dist Prote	estant	Church			
other								
2. Location								
street and number	415 Jefferson A	venue				70	_ not for	publication
city, town	Baltimore						vicinity	
county	Baltimore Coun	nty						
3. Owner of	Property	(give names and mailing a	addresses	s of all	owners	)		
name	Conference of A	African Union First						
street and number	1203 Newport O	Gap Pike				telephone	Not Ava	ilable
city, town	Wilmington		state	DE		zip code	19804	
Contril Contril Determ	buting Resource in buting Resource in nined Eligible for t nined Ineligible for ded by HABS/HAB			r	464		D number	920660220
Histori		t or Research Report at MHT						
6. Classifica	tion							
Categorydistrict _X_building(s)structuresiteobject	Ownershippublicprivateboth	Current Function agriculturecommerce/tradedefensedomesticeducationfunerarygovernmenthealth careindustry	recre X relig socia trans work unkr	ion al sportat in pro nown ant/not	culture/		ng Noi	ncontributing buildings sites structures objects Total sting Resources the Inventory

7. Descriptio	<u>n</u>	Inventory No. BA- 1000
Condition		
excellent	deteriorated	
X good	ruins	
fair	altered	

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Constructed in 1881, St. James African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church fronts east on the west side of Jefferson Avenue. First built as a one-story wood frame building it was then raised to two-stories in 1906. This Gothic Revival building has a front gable roof with a three bay wide façade and a raised central entrance. The entrance features double-leaf wood-paneled doors, a transom boarded-over, and a square-edged wood surround. Semi-circular brick steps with two iron handrails provide access to entrance. The center bay on the second story are paired 1/1 double-hung sash lancet arched windows. Each of the remaining windows are single one-light lancet arched windows. The panels above the windows are covered with weatherboard. The far right bay on the first story has a non-historic one-leaf wood paneled door covered with an aluminum awning. There is one interior brick stretcher bond chimney, and a canted oriel addition on the rear elevation. The original church was re-clad with asbestos shingles. The solid foundation is parged concrete, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Attached to the rear of the south elevation is a two-story Gothic Revival Parsonage (BA-01001). A bell hangs in a separate pyramidal roof frame structure adjacent to the church in front of the parsonage.

8. Signific	ance			Inventory No. BA- 1000
Period	Areas of Significance	Check and j	ustify below	
1600-1699 1700-1799 _X 1800-1899 _X 1900-1999 2000-	agriculture archeology X architecture art commerce communications community planning conservation	economics education engineering entertainment/     recreation ethnic heritage exploration/     settlement	<ul> <li>health/medicine</li> <li>industry</li> <li>invention</li> <li>landscape archit</li> <li>law</li> <li>literature</li> <li>maritime history</li> <li>military</li> </ul>	performing arts philosophy politics/government secture X religion science social history transportation other:
Specific dates	1881-present		Architect/Builder	Unknown
Construction da	ates 1881; 1906			
Evaluation for:				
	National Register	N	faryland Register	Xnot evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

The St. James African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church, located at 415 Jefferson Avenue, and is a important component of the community of East Towson. East Towson is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, specifically the pre-Civil War development of an African-American neighborhood in a predominately white community. The history of this property dates from the purchase of one-and-a-quarter acres of land by Daniel Harris in September 1853. This is believed to be the first documented African-American landholding in Towson, and is among the oldest such ethnic enclave in Baltimore County. Further, manumitted slaves and/or descendents of former slaves, many of who were owned by Charles Ridgely, populated the neighborhood. Hampered by the low economic status of the residents, development in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was slow, increasing after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The setting of the property, building styles, and construction materials were guided by the limited economic status of the residents and their desire to establish a neighborhood of their own without the assistance of white architects, builders, and craftsmen. By 1927, the community was ninety-five percent improved with single-family dwellings, social buildings, a school, and religious structures. Many of the current homeowners and tenants living in the neighborhood are descendents of the first African-American residents.

East Towson as a whole is representative of an important phase of architectural development in Baltimore County, illustrating the dilution of popular architectural styles to more efficiently meet the needs of the neighborhood, and the builders' untrained abilities to execute the fashionable ornamentation. Thus, East Towson provided lower cost housing in a more suburban neighborhood, rather than the urban setting their economic status typically perpetuated.

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. BA- 1000

Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland. Philadelphia, PA: G. M. Hopkins, 1877.

Baltimore County Historic Inventory.

Brooks, Neal A. and Eric G. Rockel. A History of Baltimore County. Towson, MD: Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979.

Map of Baltimore County. Philadelphia, PA: G. W. Bromley, 1915.

Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men. Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA.

Sidney, J. C. Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland, from Original Surveys. Baltimore, MD: James M. Stephens, 1850.

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property _	.20 Acre		
Acreage of historical setting	Unknown		
Quadrangle name	Towson	Quadrangle scale:	1:24,000
The same of the sa			

#### Verbal boundary description and justification

The St. James Church is located at 415 Jefferson Avenue in East Towson in the Ninth District of Baltimore County. It has historically been associated with Tax Map 70A, Parcel 464 since its construction in 1881.

## 11. Form Prepared by

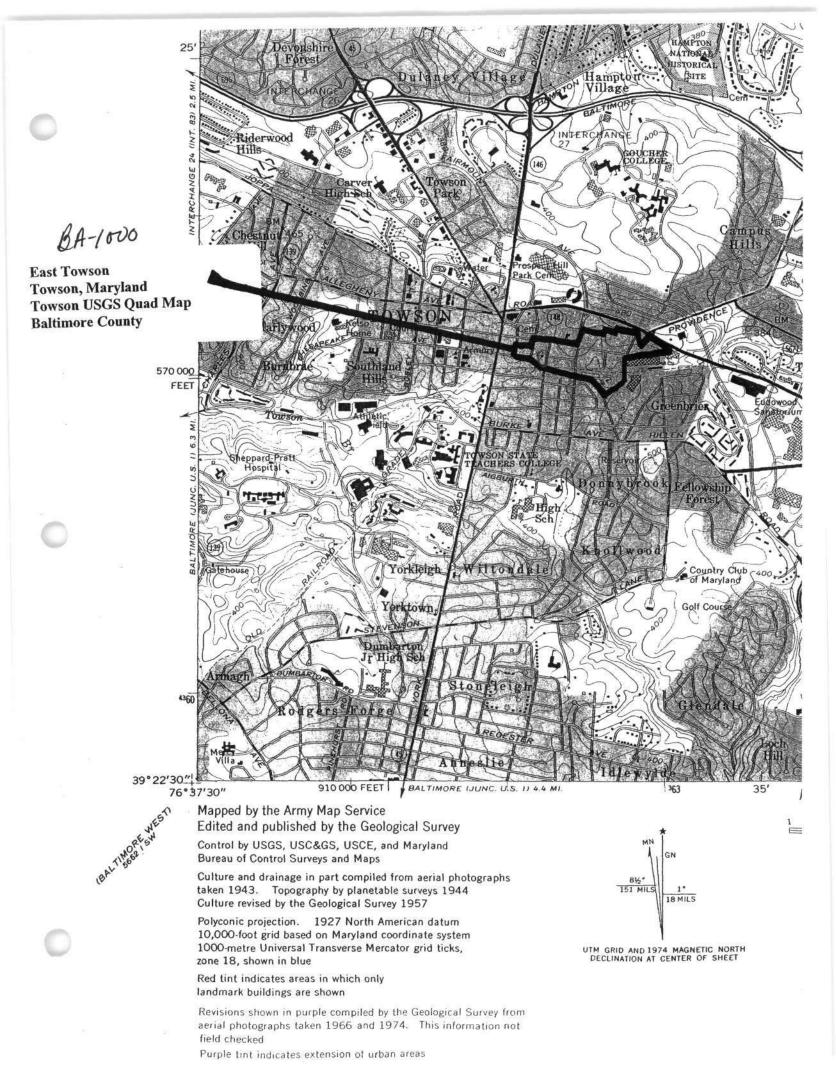
name/title	K. Baynard, R. Weidlich, and J. Bunting, Architectural Historians						
120 000	EHT Traceries, Incorporated	date	November 5, 2001				
street & number	1121 5th Street NW	telephone	202.393.1199				
city or town	Washington	state	DC				

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

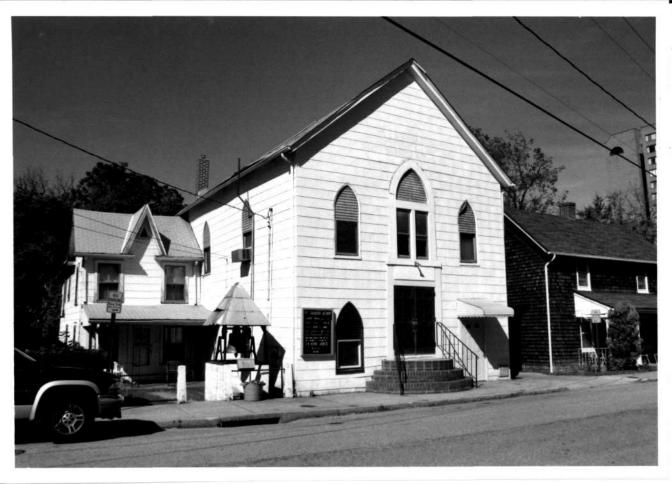
The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust DHCD/DHCP 100 Community Place Crownsville, MD 21032-2023 410-514-7600



# East Towson: Planimetric Data Name: Conference of African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church East Towson **Baltimore County** Data Sources: Planimetric Data: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400) Parcel Boundaries: Baltimore County OIT GIS Services Unit (1:2400) Study Area: Baltimore County Office of Planning (1:2400) Scale Legend 1 inch = 200 feet Prepared by: Baltimore County Office of Planning 401 Bosley Avenue Towson, Maryland 21204 June, 2001 Paved Roads Unpaved Roads ☐ Buildings Paved Parking / Driveways Vegetation Date of Data Capture: March 1996 Scale of Data Capture: 1" = 100"



I of Z

ST. JAMES AUMP Church, 415 JEFFERSON WENUE

BA- 1000

MD-SHPD

BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD



BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD MD-SHPO WEST ELEVATION LODKING EAST

ST. JAMES ALIMP CHURCH, 415 JEFFEREDN AVENUE

BA- 1000

2 of 2 TRACERIES, (d'ZOO)

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST MAG-1 #03610005608

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

HISTORIC	St. JAMES AFRICAN I	UNION METHODIST C	CHURCH
			7
AND/OR COMMON			1
LOCATIO	N <sub>415</sub> Jefferson Ave		second
STREET & NUMBER	41) 0011010011 1100		
CITY, TOWN	•		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
STATE	Towson Md	VICINITY OF Baltimore	COUNTY
CLASSIFI	CATION	B. 100	
CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENTUSE
DISTRICT	PUBLIC	_OCCUPIED	AGRICULTUREMUSEUM
BUILDING(S)	X_PRIVATE	UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIALPARK
X STRUCTURE	_BOTH	_WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONALPRIVATE RESID
SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	ENTERTAINMENT X_RELIGIOUS
OBJECT	_IN PROCESS	YES: RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENTSCIENTIFIC
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIALTRANSPORTATIMILITARYOTHER:
NAME	Thirdtend of the Al	IN P UNITED I	
STREET & NUMBER	Trustees of the Al	-	elephone #: 828-6411
STREET & NUMBER	•	-	elephone #:
	•	-	elephone #:
STREET & NUMBER	415 Jefferson ave	VICINITY OF Baltimor	elephone #:
CITY, TOWN  LOCATIO  COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEED	Toswon Md. 21204 NOF LEGAL DESCR	vicinity of Baltimor	elephone #:  Telephone #:  STATE, zip code
CITY, TOWN  LOCATIO COURTHOUSE,	Toswon Md. 21204 NOF LEGAL DESCR	VICINITY OF Baltimor	state, zip code siber #:
CITY, TOWN  LOCATIO  COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEED	Toswon Md. 21204 NOF LEGAL DESCR	VICINITY OF Baltimor	state, zip code siber #:
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CITY, TOWN  LOCATIO COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEED STREET & NUMBER CITY, TOWN  REPRESE TITLE  D/  BA-100	Toswon Md. 21204 NOF LEGAL DESCR SETC. Baltimore Count 401 Bosley Ave. Towson Md. 212 NTATION IN EXIST  This frame church to two stories in 1	VICINITY OF Baltimor RIPTION L ty Courthouse F 204 ING SURVEYS  James AUMP Church arch was first built	state, zip code  diber #: colio #: 125:118  STATE  1881 and 1906  in 1881 and was raised hancery, and choir loft

CONDITION

EXCELLENT

\_GOOD

\_DETERIORATED

\_RUINS

\_\_FAIR \_\_UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

∠UNALTERED \_ALTERED CHECK ONE

\_ORIGINAL SITE

\_\_MOVED DATE\_\_\_

#### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This church was first built as a one-story building in 1881. In 1906 it was raised to its present 2½ story form. The paneled choir loft and balustraded chancery were moved to the second floor with the sanctuary, and the first floor is now used for informal gatherings and for service facilities.

The church is basically of frame construction on a foundation of local stone. A summer beam in the first floor ceiling is supported by flared cast iron posts. Narrow, beaded vertical boards panel the walls and ceiling on the first floor, and wainscot the second floor. The church's exterior is covered in grey asbestos shingles.

The first floor plan consists of an entry and closet in the northeast corner, a kitchen in the southeast corner the main assembly room with a boxed-in stove flue, and a furnace room and rest rooms to the rear.

An exterior flight of steps rises to the main central doors, which lead to a landing slightly above the first floor level. From here a wide flight of stairs rises to the second floor. The double doors at the head of the stairs are said to be the front doors from the original church. Each door features a glass panel over a small wooden panel with cut-in corners. The door molding is a quirk-ogee with chamfer.

The second floor plan includes the pastor's office in the southeast corner and a small room with a winding stair to the balcony in the northeast corner. The balcony surmounts these rooms. It awells in a curve towards its center, and the simple flush-board vertical paneling along its leading edge follows this line. In the sanctuary, three rows of pews are divided by two aisles. The chancery is backed by a raised pulpit and choir loft. An alcove projects from the center of the rear wall. It features a religious painting. The four windows along the north and south sides rise in Gothic arches with stained glass in the upper sections. Steel tie rods connecting the walls hold the church roof in tension.

The main, or east, facade of the St. James AUMP church presents a well-planned composition. To the south, a gothic-arched window lights each floor. There is an identical window on the north the second floor. Beneath this window an awning sheltered door leads to the first floor. This door is painted red, with four black horizontal panels. The central double doors each contain six black panels surrounded by red rails and stiles. A four-pane transom tops the door. Resting directly on this framework are two windows surmounted by a wide stained glass-gothic arch. (continued)

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD

#### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

PREHISTORIC	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION
_1400-1499	_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	_LAW	SCIENCE
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE
_1600-1699	_ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
_1700-1799	_ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	_THEATER
_1800-1899	COMMERCE	_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	_TRANSPORTATION
_1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRY	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIFY)
		INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

#### BUILDER/ARCHITECT

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1861 a small group of devout Christians organized a religious society and held meetings from house to house. The first meeting was held in the home of the late James Garrett. The house yet stands near the Mount Calvary AME church. It was given to Mr. Garrett by the Pleasant family. It was the home of the late Frank Johnson and Ida Scovens Johnson. Mrs. Maria Pratt, mother of the founder of Mount Olive Baptist church (Rev. James H. Williams) , supplied the oil that gave the first light for the meetings. They worshipped in this house for years, and in October 1881, Mr. Ben Johnson and others realized the need of a church building. They purchased the present property on Jefferson Avenue from Henry Bowen. The pastor was the late Rev. James Manly, and the trustees were: Mr. Ben Johnson, Sam Preston, Alexander Frazier, Alexander Williams, and James Garrett. Saint James was the first Negro Methodist church in Towson, and was deeded to the AUMP Conference on October 17, 1881.2

The church was fully developed down through the years. The doors have been ever opened to the distressed and those oppressed by the cares of life. Spiritual life in this church has been rich, and it has been pastored by some of the most able men. Rev. J.A. Manly was the first, followed by Rev. Charles A. Williams, who was a descendant of the slave institution. He was freed by the will of General Charles Ridgely, in 1830. Ministers following Charles Williams were Rev. Colombus Sides, Rev. Alfred Hammond, Rev. J. H. Handy, Rev. J. W. Coleman, and Rev. J. H. Medley, who in 1906-7 rebuilt the church and raised it to its present two-story structure. Other ministers were: Rev. S. Mills, Rev. W. Edwards, Rev. G. F. Deshields, Rev. Samuel Jones, Rev. John Manuky, Rev. W. C. Cleaver, Rev. L. S. Stewart, and Rev. E. H. McNair.

The present pastor, Rev. J.A. McManus and his wife were sent to the church by the conference. Rev. McManus has become an active member in community affairs. A newspaper and a nursery school has been started, both spiritual and financial programs organized to deal with two major problems in the East Towson Community.

## MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

	CONTINUI	E ON	SEPARATE	SHEET	IF	NEC	ESSARY						
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	ACREAGE OF	NOMINA	ATED PROPERTY_										
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	Committe	ee to	Save E.	Towson	n						823-8	870	
	STREET & NUM	BER								TELER	PHONE	010	
	600 W. (	Chesa	apeake Av	re.									
	CITY OR TOWN							19		STAT	E		
	Towson 1	1d.	21204										

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust

. The Shaw House, 21 State Circle

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(301) 267-1438

415 Jefferson Description continued

A cast-iron bell with the inscription "Andrew Menedy, West Troy, N. Y. 1845" cast in the metal once sat in a bell tower in the church's east-west running gable. It now rests on a concrete platform to the south of the church.

Significance:

The Saint James AUMP church is an excellent interpretation of turn of the century styles by Black builders. It shows a sophistication of design and great sensitivity and sense of fashion in the woodwork.

Significance 415 Jefferson Continued

Saint James Church One Hundredth Year Anniversary Brochure (1861-1961)

Baltimore County Office of Land Records

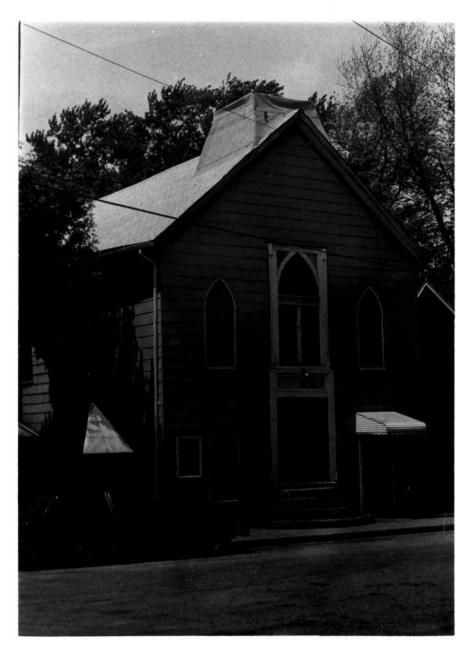
3 Ibid., footnote # 1.

#### East Towson Historical Survey

#### Major Bibliographical Reference

- 1. Baltimore County Department of The Department of Land Records.
- 2. Maps of Baltimore County 1877 G. M. Hopkins, 1898 Bromley Atlas, 1915 Bromley Atlas. Towson Bicentenial 1768-1968. Bicentenial Committee of Baltimore County, Towson, Maryland. Lanier Press.
- 3. Baltimore County Tax Maps 1971
  Baltimore County Office of Land Records.
- 4. Census Tract of Baltimore County 1850-1870.
- 5. Streets of Towson Paper written by William Halifield.
- 6. Inventory of Slaves General Charles R. 1790, 1830. Article entitled Negro Sufferage August 18,1894.
- 7. Certificates of Manumission March 1820, 1840
  Baltimore City Department of Legislative Reference.
  Record of Court Proceedings 1829-1860
- 8. Anniversary Brochure St. James African Union Methodist Church.
- 9. Disbursement Record for materials used to build the Towson "colored" school 1868 Freedmans Bureau Baltimore. Maryland
- 10. Lynching of Howard Cooper July 1885 Maryland Journal 1885.
- 11. Record of Incorporation Baltimore County Refief Association, Towson, Maryland, 21204 - Baltimore County Office of Land Records.
- 12. Baltimore County Department of Education.
- 13. Judicial Record JB 39-103
  " " LMB 146 238 P
  Baltimore County Courts





BA-1000 St. James AUMPChurch. 415 Jefferson Ave. Towson, Md. east Merry Stinson 1977